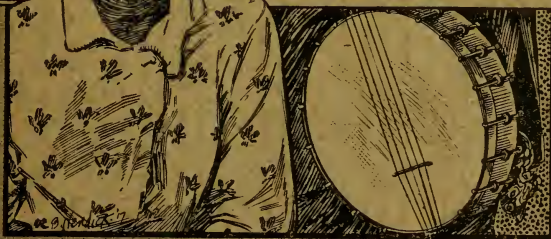


# DENISON'S BLACK-FACE SERIES

PRICE  
25 CENTS



Hitting the  
African Harp



NO PLAYS EXCHANGED

T.S. DENISON & COMPANY  
PUBLISHERS CHICAGO

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Winning Widow, 2 acts, 1½ hrs. (25c) .....	2 4

**T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, Publishers, 623 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago**

# HITTING THE AFRICAN HARP

A BLACK-FACE SKETCH  
FOR A BANJO DUO

BY

WADE STRATTON

AUTHOR OF

*"Almost an Actor," "An Awful Appetite," "The Barber's Bride,"  
"Cash Money," "When Cork Is King," Etc.*



CHICAGO  
T. S. DENISON & COMPANY  
PUBLISHERS

# HITTING THE AFRICAN HARP

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## CHARACTERS.

GEORGE ..... *A Music Master*  
HENRY ..... *A Pupil*

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TIME OF PLAYING—*Fifteen to twenty minutes, depending  
on length of specialties introduced.*

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NOTE.—This sketch was written as a vehicle for a banjo-playing team, introducing solos and duets, and requires that both performers be banjo-players as well as black-face comedians, to make it effective. As the popularity of “popular” music is ephemeral, selection of timely musical numbers is left to the discretion of the players.

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## STAGE DIRECTIONS.

*R.* means right of stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance; *R. 3 E.*, right entrance up stage, etc.; up stage, away from footlights; down stage, near footlights. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.



NOTICE.—Production of this play is free to amateurs, but the sole professional rights are reserved by the publishers.

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## HITTING THE AFRICAN HARP

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SCENE: *A simple interior set, or interior drop in "one," if scenery is available; but the sketch can be presented anywhere. A chair C., and another chair L.*

*At rise, GEORGE is seated in chair C., playing a lively rag number (not too long). He concludes with an unfinished "break," which is completed with two loud knocks off stage.*

GEORGE (*startled*). Come in! (*Pause.*) Come in! (*Scratches head in bewilderment, then plays another incomplete "break." Two knocks off stage.*) Come in, dawg-gone you! (*Pause.*) Is you a ghost, or is you ain't?

*Plays chords as before, listens for knocks, is greatly relieved at hearing no response, and is about to resume playing when the two knocks are repeated. Enter HENRY, carrying banjo.*

GEORGE. Dawg-gone! Kin you beat it?

HENRY. Ah ain't gwine to beat it. Ah just come.

GEORGE. Bustin' in that a-way, you done shook up mah nervous cistern.

HENRY. Yes. What?

GEORGE (*sarcastically*). Yes, what? What kind o' language is you talkin', niggah?

HENRY. Yes. What? Is dis hyah Professuh Pickett's musical deservatory?

GEORGE. Ah lak to know what it is if it ain't.

HENRY (*turning*). Oh, it ain't? Ah's lookin' fo'—

GEORGE (*grabbing his arm*). Ah ain't says it ain't! Ah says—

HENRY. Yes. What?

GEORGE (*shouting furiously*). Don't say that again!

HENRY. Yes. What? A little loudeh, please. Ah's hahd o' hearin'.

GEORGE. Is you deaf?

HENRY (*threateningly*). Who you callin' a thief?

GEORGE. Clam yo'self, niggah. Clam yo'self.

HENRY. Ah's lookin' fo' Professuh Pickett.

GEORGE. You ain't lookin' fo' Professuh Pickett. You is lookin' at him.

HENRY. Yes. What?

GEORGE (*exasperated*). Professuh Pickett! (*Thumps himself on the chest.*) Ah is him!

HENRY. Thin? Ah reckon you is, exercisin' yo'self that-a-way.

GEORGE. Ah ain't say thin. Ah say him! Ah's him! Cain't you unde'stand grammah?

HENRY. No, not my gra'ma. Mah Ma, she sent me.

GEORGE. Boy, you is deaf in the ears an' dumb in the head. Hyah's mah cyard. (*Takes playing card from pocket and hands it to HENRY without looking at it.*)

HENRY (*looks at card*). No, Boss, Ah is lookin' fo' Professuh Jawge Pickett. Dis black boy's name is Jack. (*Shows playing card, the jack of clubs or spades.*)

GEORGE. Mah mistake! (*Takes back playing card and hands him a visiting card.*)

HENRY (*looks at it*). Oh, Professuh Pickett. Why ain't you tol' me so?

GEORGE. Professuh Pickett, instructifier in music an' banjo playin'. It say dat on de door.

HENRY. Ah is yo' new musical stewed-nut.

GEORGE. Ah see yo' got yo' hyarp. Is you a amachoor or a professachoor?

HENRY. Yes. What?

GEORGE. Cain't you hear what Ah say?

HENRY. Ma say she ain't gwine to pay. You is to take out yo' wages in laundry.

GEORGE. Yo' maw is a laundress?

HENRY. Undress? No, sah! Ah ain't come to no gymnasium. Ah come to inquire some musical inflammation.

GEORGE. Ah ain't say undress! Ah says laundress—(*imitates scrubbing at washboard*) soapy-soapy, washy-washy!

HENRY. You said 'em, boss!

GEORGE. Dawg-gone if he ain't a Chinaman!

HENRY. An' Ma, she sho' do lather a mean cake o' soap! Ma says ma music is triflin' no-'count. She don't want no geniuses in the fambly. She wants to make a wash lady out o' me. But she says when Ah help scrub the clothes Ah is too musical when Ah puts 'em through the wringer. Ma says Ah tears a wicked rag.

GEORGE. You sure is a bright specimen of ornithology!

HENRY. Yes. What?

GEORGE. What instrument of musical torture is you the best on?

HENRY. Yes, Ah got mah red vest on.

GEORGE. Ah ain't passin' no remahks about yo' dressin'!

HENRY. Lesson? That's what Ah come fo'. (*Lays banjo on chair L. and draws from his vest pocket a folding music stand. This is worked by having a narrow pocket of the necessary length inside the trouser leg, opening into the vest pocket. The vest pocket is cut so that end of folded stand is easily reached.*)

GEORGE (*watching him*). Reckon that boy could git a gallon jug out o' his hip pocket! (*Draws the chair L. toward C., alongside other chair. Takes sheet of music out of his coat pocket and places it on music stand which HENRY has set up.*) All right, boy. Let's go.

HENRY. Too low? (*Starts to read just stand.*)

GEORGE. No, you pink-eyed baboon! Ah says, let's go!

HENRY. Yes. What?

GEORGE. Aw, set down! (*Gesture.*) Squatty-voo! (*They both sit.*) Now go an' show me is you a good banjo teaser.

HENRY. Yes. What?

GEORGE. Go ahead! (*Waves his hand at him.*) Play!

HENRY. Hyah is one o' my favorights, entitled, "Ah Broke Mah Watch-Spring in the Spring Because Ah Let It Fall."

(HENRY plays solo number, GEORGE waving his hand to keep time. HENRY beats time with his foot, the taps becoming more and more extravagant. GEORGE glowers at

him, and every few moments he grabs HENRY'S foot and holds it still, but as soon as he releases it, HENRY resumes tapping. As HENRY finishes solo, GEORGE draws a pistol and points it at HENRY'S foot.)

GEORGE. Boy, yo' life is in dangeh, likewise yo' sole!

HENRY. Boss, how you like mah music? Kin you learn me mo' yit besides, it'll be no small feat.

GEORGE. No small feet? Ah'll say they ain't! Now, Ah'll learn you a jew-ette. Play this hyar music. (*Points to stand.*)

HENRY. Ah don't play printin', Professuh. Ah plays music. Ah is a musicker bah ear.

GEORGE. Has you got as good a ear fo' music as you got fo' language, you sure is gwine to be a musical prodigal! Let's go!

(*Duet for finish. Pantomime comedy business is introduced by HENRY tapping his foot, and GEORGE trying to suppress him without interrupting the music. If GEORGE can do banjo swinging, he can make threatening gestures at HENRY'S head, HENRY ducking each time the banjo is swung at him. GEORGE finally gets his own foot on HENRY'S, and himself beats time extravagantly with his other foot. Duet music until—*)

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Borrowed Luncheon, 20 min.	5	
Borrowing Trouble, 20 min.	3	5
Case Against Casey, 40 min.	23	
Class Ship, 35 min.	3	8
Divided Attentions, 35 min.	1	4
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Getting Rid of Father, 20 min.	3	1
Goose Creek Line, 1 hr.	3	10
Great Pumpkin Case, 35 min.	12	
Hans Von Smash, 30 min.	4	3
Honest Peggy, 25 min.	8	
Irish Linen Peddler, 40 min.	3	3
Just Like a Woman, 35 min.	3	3
Last Rehearsal, 25 min.	2	3
Men Not Wanted, 30 min.	8	
Mother Goose's Goslings, 30 m.	7	9
Mrs. Jenkins' Brilliant Idea, 35m.	8	
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Paper Wedding, 30 min.	1	5
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Rummage Sale, 50 min.	4	10
Sewing for the Heathen, 40 min.	9	
Shadows, 35 min.	3	4
Sing a Song of Seniors, 30 min.	7	
Taking Father's Place, 30 min.	5	3
Teacher Kin I Go Home, 35 min.	7	3
Too Much of a Good Thing, 45 min.	3	6
Two Ghosts in White, 20 min.	8	
Two of a Kind, 40 min.	2	3
Uncle Dick's Mistake, 20 min.	3	2
Wanted: a Correspondent, 45 m.	4	4
Watch, a Wallet, and a Jack of Spades, 40 min.	3	6
Whole Truth, 40 min.	5	4
Who's the Boss? 30 min.	3	6
Wide Enough for Two, 45 min.	5	2
Wrong Baby, 25 min.	8	

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Country Justice, 15 min.	8	
Cow that Kicked Chicago, 25 m.	3	2
Family Strike, 20 min.	3	3
First-Class Hotel, 20 min.	4	
For Love and Honor, 20 min.	2	1
Fudge and a Burglar, 15 min.	5	

Great Medical Dispensary, 30 m.	6	
Initiating a Granger, 25 min.	8	
Kansas Immigrants, 20 min.	5	1
Lottie Sees It Through, 35 min.	3	4
Pair of Lunatics, 20 min.	1	1
Pat, the Apothecary, 35 min.	6	2
Please Pass the Cream, 20 min.	1	1
Second Childhood, 15 min.	2	2
Smith's Unlucky Day, 20 min.	1	1
That Rascal Pat, 30 min.	3	2
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Fresh Timothy Hay, 20 min.	2	1
Her Hero, 20 min.	1	1
Hey, Rube! 15 min.	1	
It Might Happen, 20 min.	1	1
Little Miss Enemy, 15 min.	1	1
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Marriage and After, 10 min.	1	
One Sweetheart for Two, 20 m.	2	
Oyster Stew, 10 min.	2	
Pete Yansen's Gurl's Moder, 10m.	1	
Quick Lunch Cabaret, 20 min.	4	
Si and I, 15 min.	1	
Special Sale, 15 min.	2	
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Such Ignorance, 15 min.	2	
Sunny Son of Italy, 15 min.	1	
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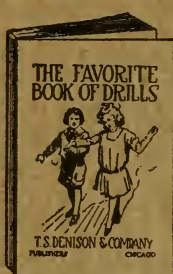
Axin' Her Father, 25 min.	2	3
Booster Club of Blackville, 25 min.	10	
Colored Honeymoon, 25 min.	2	2
Coon Creek Courtship, 15 m.	1	1
Coontown Thirteen Club, 25 m.	14	
Darktown Fire Brigade, 25 m.	10	
Good Mornin' Judge, 35 min.	9	2
Hungry, 15 min.	2	
Love and Lather, 35 min.	3	2
Memphis Mose, 25 min.	5	1
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